

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 115

By Brooks H

A RESOLUTION to direct the Education Oversight Committee to study Tennessee's system of funding public education.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the Joint Committee on Education Oversight study education programs, initiatives, or topics deemed appropriate to further the cause of public education; and

WHEREAS, school systems in Tennessee are facing unprecedented accountability at the national, state, and local levels for student and school performance; and

WHEREAS, school boards have embraced this accountability recognizing the significance of student and school achievement to the future success of our state and nation; and

WHEREAS, boards of education are completely dependent upon other elected bodies for the fiscal resources that are crucial to meeting the very accountability standards that have been set by federal and state government; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee is one of only eleven states in the country where boards of education have no ability to raise revenue to meet the needs of their respective school districts and the students they serve; and

WHEREAS, more than 80 percent of elected school boards in the United States have fiscal independence and the authority to address and balance school budget needs with fiscal capacity and the desires of the community; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee's uncommon system of funding public education can result in unproductive funding battles and criticisms between boards of education and local governments, leaving the public with no clear line of accountability or authority; and

WHEREAS, the overwhelming majority of states in the country have recognized the importance of providing those responsible and held accountable for school performance with the decision-making tools necessary to meet the legal and moral responsibilities of the elected position; and

WHEREAS, recent actions by some local funding bodies to reduce local effort to schools at a time when the State increased its commitment shined new light on possible flaws within Tennessee's system of funding public education at the local level; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that the Education Oversight Committee examine Tennessee's system of funding public education at the local level and that such examination include consideration of providing boards of education with fiscal independence.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an enrolled copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Chair of the Education Oversight Committee.